

HAWAI'I IMMIGRANT HERITAGE  
PRESERVATION CENTER

"I'm worried about the collections!" Again and again the fired researchers express their deepest concern with these words.

Kazuko Sinoto, research associate, has a title and a desk once more at the Museum. Her research contract to work on the collections for nine months has just been signed after weeks of delay.

Several sizeable and important collections acquired by the Hawai'i Immigrant Heritage Preservation Center (HIHPC) need attention. They contain valuable information about life in Hawai'i from the last half of the 19th century to the mid-20th century.

Many of these documents need to be translated and assessed before they can be accepted into the Museum's collections or returned to their owners.

Sinoto has been contracted to assess these collections. If she advises that the Museum should preserve them, who is going to catalog and care for them?

Two positions were eliminated and the Director has no intention to replace them. Activities have also been cut. Research and

mounting new exhibits and soliciting new collections are no longer possible. Caring for present collections has been severely cut back.

HIHPC is a center for preserving the history of all immigrant groups. In 1978 the Center celebrated the centennial of Portuguese Immigration. In 1980 it celebrated the Puerto Ricans' 80th anniversary in Hawai'i. In 1981 it was the Filipino Heritage in Hawai'i. In 1985 the centennial of Japanese contract labor.

The Center, if it hasn't been abandoned by the Museum, should be helping the Chinese to celebrate their upcoming 150th anniversary in Hawai'i. Instead, the Director has said publically that he is not interested in historical collections -- they are not a Museum priority.

The Center is important to thousands of local families whose ancestors came to Hawai'i and worked in the sugar cane and pineapple fields. Unless the Director changes his plans, the Center's collections will be "integrated" into the Museum's general collections, and there will be no Immigrant Heritage Preservation Center left.



As Dr. Kenneth P. Emory, retired Museum scientist, said: "Today this proud heritage is in grave danger of being lost." Without its basic research staff, the Museum is on its way to becoming just another entertainment center for tourism. Without its research staff, the Museum will have lost its soul.

IS THIS WHAT YOU WANT? IF YOU BELIEVE WHAT 1300 PETITION SIGNERS BELIEVE, THAT THE CITIZENS OF HAWAI'I SHOULD HAVE SOME SAY ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE MUSEUM, PLEASE HELP HO'O HAWAI'I WITH ITS TWO MAIN CONCERNS: reverse the firings, and develop a good public input program to find the best plan for the future of the Museum without destroying its soul. It is not too late!

Mail to: Ho'o Hawai'i, 3020 Manoa Road, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96822.

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| ( ) I would like to volunteer my time.  | ( ) I will write letters to protest the firings.        |
| ( ) I would like to help with expenses. | ( ) I will request my legislators hold public hearings. |
| ( ) I would like more information.      |   |

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

# Which Road For The Bishop Museum?

VOL. 1 NO. 3

THE NEWSLETTER OF HO'O HAWAI

HONOLULU, HAWAI'I FEBRUARY, 1986

## A LOOK AT THE MUSEUM'S FINANCES

For about 80 years -- from 1896 until 1975 -- the Bishop Museum operated as a Trust established by Charles R. Bishop in memory of his wife, Bernice Pauahi Bishop.

During this time all of the Museum's basic buildings were constructed, the collections built up, the staff built up, and a world-wide reputation built up as an outstanding research institution. Research was, after all, the primary goal of the Trust.

Most importantly, the Museum was paying its bills and never encountered major financial losses.

All this changed in 1976 when the Trust was broken and a new non-profit corporation was set up to own and manage the Museum.

The new system almost immediately started losing money -- large amounts of money. Nearly \$2 million was lost between 1977 and 1980.

In desperation, the new corporation sold off one of its two landholdings and invested the money in high-interest certificates of deposit. This helped cover expenses until 1982, when interest rates declined.

Another one and a half million has been lost in the 1983-1985 period.

Put bluntly, the Museum is making about a half million dollars less now than it was three years ago. Ho'o Hawai'i feels the non-profit corporation should have seen the lower interest rates and done something before the losses got so large.

The corporation's response is that they are now doing something -- they fired half of their research staff.

But Ho'o Hawai'i feels the firings did not involve the staff or public, were done in a callous manner, and were against the whole philosophy of Charles Bishop's original Trust and what the Museum is supposed to be doing.

So, the major thing the new corporation has done over the last 10 years is lose money. The second thing it has done is to put more and more dollars into administration and "fundraising".

The old Trust never spent any money on fundraising. The new corporation has spent over \$300,000 on average each year for the past four years.

Yet, during that same time, income has declined by about \$500,000 per year.

Result: the fundraising arm is costing \$300,000 and bringing in \$500,000 less funds per year, for a net loss to the Museum of \$800,000 per year.

While administration and "fundraising" has been beefed up in the new corporation, research has been hurt.

In the five years 1981-1985, fundraising and administration had their budgets go up an average of 8% per year, while research went up 3% per year.

So, administration went up above the rate of inflation while research did not.

And then research was actually cut due to last summer's firings.

The bottom line of the research cutbacks and the increases to administrative costs is this. Research is supposed to be the top budget priority. Five years ago research's budget was priority, and was 2/3rds higher than management and fundraising. But in 1986, as a result of the research cuts and the raises for administration, the two budgets are becoming roughly equal.

Charles R. Bishop, who donated his wife's prized collections of Hawaiian artifacts to the Museum to begin its collections, would not be happy if he knew his Trust had been broken.

He would be even less pleased to hear of the sad results to research and the Museum since the breaking of the Trust.



HO'O HAWAI'I, a Committee  
Concerned for the Museum's Future  
3020 Manoa Road  
Honolulu, HI 96822



## UP DATE

### DR. FRANK HOWARTH, MUSEUM RESEARCHER

Dr. Frank Howarth received notification from the National Science Foundation in mid-November 1985 that they had approved a grant proposal he had prepared while previously employed by the Museum. At this time it is expected that the funding will begin February 1, 1986.

The National Science Foundation does not usually fund grants if the principal investigator is merely a private contractor. Therefore, Howarth has received a commitment from Bishop Museum to be reinstated as a regular staff member for the length of the grant.

Funding from this grant will allow Howarth to continue his studies of Hawaiian cave biology -- identifying which animals and plants live in the caves of Hawai'i, how they interact, and how they evolved into what they are today.

Curatorial responsibilities of the museum for the Hawaiian insect collection are only partly fulfilled at this time.

The collection of specimens appears secure for the near future, but access by researchers is restricted.

Ho'o Hawai'i fears that the collection will fail to grow and develop properly without more curatorial attention, and the information stored in the collection will be less available to the public than it has been for the past 15 years since Howarth joined the staff.

While we applaud Howarth's reinstatement as a regular Museum staff member with full fringe benefits, we believe his appointment should have been permanent, and not just for the length of the federal grant. We will continue our efforts toward the goal of seeing the reinstatement for all who were fired.

### MARSHALL SAHLIN'S COMMENTS

World-famous anthropologist Marshall Sahlins wrote this about the firing of researchers in the Museum's anthropology department:

"These dismissals will completely cripple the Hawaiian research of the museum, breaking all continuity with the respected traditions of that research, and minimizing the value of the (Museum's) Hawaiian collections."

Sahlins is well known in Hawai'i for his studies of Hawaiian culture.

## UP DATE

### DR. G. ALLAN SAMUELSON, MUSEUM RESEARCHER

A private donation, made specifically to the Coleoptera (beetle) section of the Entomology Department at the Museum has funded the cost of one curator and one technician for one year.

Dr. G. Allan Samuelson and Ms. June M. Ibara are back at their desks in the Entomology department. They are not back as regular staff members, but as private contractors, without any fringe benefits, and only for one year.

Their duties involve routine management of the collection of specimens, which is an essential operation in any large research collection.

There is no assurance that the funding will continue because the donation was from a private family. This family has donated their own funds to tide things over. What will happen when these funds run out is anybody's guess.

We at Ho'o Hawai'i think that what should happen is that Samuelson and Ibara should be reinstated as regular staff with all fringe benefits and assigned to carry on both curating and research.

The Museum needs regular staff members to obtain foundation grants. The major government source of such grants is the National Science Foundation. Their grants do not include the full salary of researchers, and so a Museum must have research staff as employees in order to qualify for such grants.

## UPDATE

### DR. FRANK J. RADOVSKY, FORMER CHAIRMAN OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENTOMOLOGY

As a result of disagreements with the Museum's administration over the firing of several research and technical staff members in his department, Dr. Frank Radovsky submitted his resignation as chairman of the Department, effective September 1, 1985.

On December 1, 1985, Radovsky left the Museum and is now in California in a search for a new job.

Radovsky's position as chairman is being advertised nationally and internationally by the Museum in an effort to fill the vacancy by the beginning of the Museum's next fiscal year (July 1, 1986).

Ho'o Hawai'i regards the departure of

Radovsky, a notable scholar, as a serious loss to the Museum.

With nearly all of the Entomology research staff fired last summer and the Museum's world-class specimen collections stagnating, the Department requires much more than just filling its chairman's job.

### BISHOP MUSEUM'S DIFFICULTIES

On January 11th, the Honolulu Star-Bulletin published a letter about Bishop Museum from Edwin N. Ferdon Jr., a prominent American archaeologist and museum ethnologist who has worked in the Pacific. In part, his letter stated:

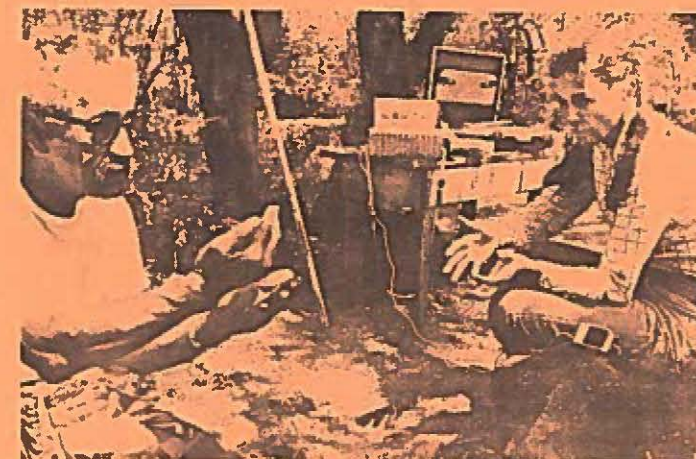
"Financial problems have been common to numerous nonprofit research and educational institutions, but I cannot recall one that so brutally crucified its staff for an indebtedness which ultimately has to have resulted from previous poor decisions by the policy-making body of the organization, that is, the board of trustees and its chosen administrators."

This is precisely the feeling of Ho'o Hawai'i. Researchers were "brutally" fired by the trustees and their newly-hired Director because of financial problems brought on by erroneous policies adopted by the very same trustees. As one protest sign said last summer: "Don't fire the researchers, fire the trustees."

THE BUGS in our last brochure were from the Museum's large collection. Museum entomologists found the two Hawaiian insects had evolved blind in dark lava tubes.



Supporters of Ho'o Hawai'i publicize their demands in a recent demonstration outside the Museum including "Preserve Hawaiian Culture" and "Research Center, Not Tourist Trap."



Anthropologist Marion Kelly in a field interview with Augustine Maunalei describing ancient horticultural practices of Hawaii.